



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY



Press Release

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LDAF to Relocate Shelter Pets

Baton Rouge, LA (August 28, 2016) – Tomorrow, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) will relocate pets currently housed in the mobile pet shelter located at the Baton Rouge River Center to Dixon Correctional Institute (DCI) in Jackson, La. This is an effort toward better long term recovery and for the health of the pets as officials work toward housing solutions for those in the shelter.

“As a veterinarian by profession, I consulted with the state veterinarian and members of his staff and we concur that the best course of action for the health of these animals is to move them to DCI since there is a kennel and a veterinary hospital designed for disaster pet sheltering at that location. Although there are many factors that went into this decision, the health and welfare of these pets is of great importance,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry Mike Strain, D.V.M. “Also, in the event there is another storm or weather event, we believe this will be a better location for the safety of these animals in a long term situation,” added Strain.

Strain worked with multiple agencies, including the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and the American Red Cross, to inform the shelter residents and to help them cope with the stress of being apart from their animals. All agencies have assured the residents that they will have an opportunity to visit the animals daily until their transition to housing takes place and they can be reunited full-time with their pets.

At this time, the mobile pet shelter is housing 45 dogs and 34 cats. The mobile pet shelter was activated August 15, 2016 and is only a temporary facility for displaced pets in an effort to co-locate pets and their owners. At DCI, the pets will be paired with an inmate trustee who will care for that pet. The DCI animal shelter was built in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. This emergency pet shelter is often used in disasters.

At this time, the DOTD will transport pet owners Monday, August 29, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. to visit with their pets. A school bus will pick up shelter residents in front of the Baton

Rouge River Center. Starting Tuesday, August 30, 2016, transportation will begin at 9:00 a.m. daily for owners to visit their pets at DCI.

A veterinarian will visit DCI daily to check on the pets. The LDAF will help arrange delivery of pets back to the River Center when evacuees leave the shelter.

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